



# Examiner Dave's Report

## IELTS Task 2 Writing

**Topic:** Sentencing

**Candidate:**

**Target Score:** 6.5

**Overall Score:** 6

Task Achievement	Cohesion & Coherence	Vocabulary	Grammar	Overall Score (Task 2)
6	6	6	6	6

For many centuries, people have been trying to find a perfect legislation system which is fair for victims and for offenders. Some opine that each crime requires an individual analysis and the punishment level should be personalised. However, others tend to believe that every offender should be judged based on the severity of the crime. Personally, I agree with the second point of view and I will support my stand with valid arguments in the following paragraphs.

To begin with, every offender has personal reasons why he or she committed a crime. Nobody is born as a criminal and only life circumstances force a person to break a law. According to the statistics, people with the low socio-economic status have more chances to end up in prison. For example, poor living conditions and a lack of money are the most common reasons of shoplifting. Nevertheless, should the judge take into account a financial situation of the thief? I believe that the low income cannot be an excuse for a crime.

A personal approach to every offence in the legal system can encourage people to do more crime. In other words, people will stop being afraid of the law because it can become less straightforward. Now, people know that if you kill a human, you are going to jail. When the punishment level for a murder will vary from one case to another, it can lure people to have a second thought thinking that they have serious reasons to break the law and believing that the court can forgive them. This practice can have tremendous consequences and lead to a raise in a crime rate.

In conclusion, an individualized approach to select the level of punishment can sound perfect, unfortunately, this method is not suitable for our society. To control the crime rate and prevent offences from happening, the government should have very straightforward laws where every citizen understands the consequences of bad actions.

Word count: 323

### **Complete rewrite by Dave:**

For centuries, countries have striven to strike the right balance between fixed sentences for crimes and taking heed of the circumstances of a given crime. Personally, I believe that the former is more valuable due to its deterring effect.

Proponents of individualized sentences often point out the unique context of every crime. Circumstances always play a role in shaping a person's life to the point at which crime becomes a viable option. The best evidence of this comes from the simple fact that economic status is the number one determiner of criminal activity. Take for example shoplifting. The majority of shoplifters are poor and their reasons are diverse. One person might steal to feed their family while another does it from desire or to get a rush from taking a risk. Though the crime is the same, the circumstances seemingly dictate separate sentences.

However, such a personalized approach to sentencing risks undermining law and order. If people know that they can make excuses to get away with a crime, however

legitimate they might be, they are more likely to commit the crime. Conversely, if every case of shoplifting is punished the same with little or no consideration of the motives, fewer people will shoplift. This applies to all crimes and is the central motivating principle of deterrence which is the foundation of law and all stable societies.

In conclusion, though fixed sentences may appear unfair at first glance, they have an inimitable effect on society. Courts will always strive to strike some balance but the more straightforward and predictable law is, the more effectively it will deter potential criminals.

## Task Achievement: Band 6

For many centuries, people have been trying to find a perfect legislation system which is fair for victims and for offenders. Some opine that each crime requires an individual analysis and the punishment ~~level~~ should be personalised. However, others tend to believe that every offender should be judged based on the ~~severity of the crime~~. Personally, I agree with the second point of view and I will support my stand with valid arguments in the following paragraphs.

To begin with, every offender ~~has personal reasons why he or she committed a crime~~. Nobody is born as a criminal and only life circumstances force a person to break a law. According to the statistics, people with the low socio-economic status have more chances to end up in prison. For example, poor living conditions and a lack of money are the most common reasons of shoplifting. Nevertheless, ~~should the judge take into account a financial situation of the thief? I believe that the low income cannot be an excuse for a crime.~~

A personal approach to every offence in the legal system can encourage people to do more crime. In other words, people will stop being afraid of the law because it can become less straightforward. Now, people know that if you kill a human, you are going to jail. When the punishment level for a murder will vary from one case to another, it can lure people to have a second thought thinking that they have serious reasons to break the law and believing that the court can forgive them. ~~This practice can have tremendous consequences and lead to a raise in a crime rate.~~

In conclusion, an individualized approach to select the level of punishment can sound perfect, unfortunately, this method is not suitable for our ~~actual~~ society. To control the crime rate and prevent offences from happening, the government should have very straightforward laws where every citizen understands the consequences of bad actions.

## Cohesion & Coherence: Band 6

For ~~many~~ centuries, people have been trying to find a perfect legislation system ~~which is fair for to both~~ victims and ~~for~~ offenders. Some opine that each crime requires ~~an~~ individual analysis and the punishment level should be personalised. ~~However, others~~ Others tend to believe that every offender should be judged based on the severity of the crime. Personally, I agree with the

**Comment [G1]:** This confuses the question a small bit. The question is whether punishments should take into account factors such as the severity of the particular crime – better to just say 'based on the crime itself'

**Comment [G2]:** This is a bit long for paraphrasing the question – it is ok but you are better using this time on your support later. Try to paraphrase in 1 sentence and then give your opinion.

**Comment [G3]:** This is a good, clear opinion.

**Comment [G4]:** Good but could be a bit stronger 'personal mitigating reasons' that would show that it is not just about the personal reasons but about how they should shape the sentence.

**Comment [G5]:** Don't put questions in your writing because they are too informal.

**Comment [G6]:** There is not enough support for that view here. You should go into more detail about a person who shoplifts in order to feed their family vs a person who does it just for fun – should they both get the same sentence?

**Comment [G7]:** Yes but this is a bit of a straw man argument. No one is saying that they will completely excuse a crime, just that they should be a factor in the punishment.

**Comment [G8]:** Good but write it a bit clear: Nonetheless, taking into account the circumstances of a crime may encourage people to commit more crimes.

**Comment [G9]:** Yes, this is the idea of deterrence – there will be less to deter people if they think they can get off with good enough excuses.

**Comment [G10]:** Ok but law does take into account the circumstances in most cases. For example, if you're driving a car and it is an accident, if you were on your phone, if you were drunk. If you kill in self-defense, in a moment of blind rage or plan it out for years, etc.

**Comment [G11]:** Ok but both paragraphs are a bit general. Try to draw more specific conclusions: The crime rate rises statistically in countries that are too lenient in their consideration of a criminal's motives and context.

**Comment [G12]:** Good conclusion – clear opinion and an extra detail!

second ~~point of view~~ view and I will support my stand with valid arguments in the following paragraphs.

To begin with, every offender has personal reasons why he or she has committed a crime. Nobody is born ~~as~~ a criminal and only life circumstances force a person to break ~~a the~~ law. According to ~~the many~~ statistics, people ~~with the~~ from low socio-economic ~~status backgrounds~~ have ~~more chances~~ a greater chance to end up in prison. For example, poor living conditions and a lack of money are the most common reasons of shoplifting. ~~Nevertheless~~, should the judge take into account ~~a the~~ financial situation of the thief? I believe that ~~the~~ low income cannot be an excuse for a crime.

A personal approach to every offence in the legal system can encourage people to do more crime. In other words, people will stop being afraid of the law because ~~it can as it~~ becomes s less straightforward. Now, people know that if you kill a human, you are going to jail. When the punishment level for a murder ~~will varies~~ from one case to another, it can lure people to have ~~a~~ second thoughts, ~~thinking that they have serious reasons to break the law and~~ believing that the court ~~can may~~ forgive them. ~~This practice can have tremendous consequences and lead to a~~ raise in ~~a the~~ crime rate.

In conclusion, an individualized approach to select the level of punishment ~~can~~ sounds s perfect, unfortunately, this method is not suitable for our society. To control the crime rate and prevent offences from happening, the government should have very straightforward laws where every citizen understands the consequences of their bad actions.

**Comment [G13]:** This is fine but it is better to include your main idea/reason why here: Personally, I would argue there ought to be fixed sentences in order to deter criminals.

**Comment [G14]:** Don't overuse linking phrases or you will get marked down for cohesion and coherence.

**Comment [G15]:** Good to state the result at the end – this is an example of logical structure of ideas.

## Vocabulary: Band 6

For many centuries, people have been trying to ~~find a perfect~~ perfect the ~~legislation~~ legal system which is fair for victims and for offenders. Some opine that each crime requires an individual analysis and the particular punishment level should be personalised. However, others tend to believe that every offender should be judged based on the ~~sevirity~~ severity of the crime. Personally, I agree with the second point of view and I will support my stand with valid arguments in the following paragraphs.

To begin with, every offender has personal reasons why he or she ~~committed~~ committed a crime. Nobody is born as a criminal and only life circumstances ~~force a person to break a law~~ compel breaking the law. According to ~~the statistics~~ recent research, people with the low socio-economic ~~status backgrounds~~ have ~~more a greater chance~~ chances to of ending up in prison. For example, poor living conditions and a lack of money are the most common ~~reasons of~~ motives for shoplifting. Nevertheless, should the judge take into account a financial situation of the thief? I believe that ~~the low income~~ financial stressors cannot be ~~an~~ excuses for a crime.

A personal approach to every offence in the legal system can encourage people to ~~de-commit~~ more crimes s. In other words, ~~people will stop being afraid of the law because it can become less~~ straightforward the law will cease to act as a deterrent if punishments are too subjective and flexible. Now, people know that if you kill ~~a human~~ someone, you are going to jail. When the punishment level for a murder will vary from one case to another, it can lure people to have a second thought thinking that they have ~~serious reasons~~ cause to break the law and believing that the court ~~can might grant them leniency~~ forgive them. This practice can have tremendous consequences and lead to a raise in a crime rate.

In conclusion, an individualized approach to select the level of punishment ~~can~~ sounds s perfect, unfortunately, this method is not suitable for our current society. To control the crime rate and prevent offences from happening, the government should have ~~very straightforward~~

**Comment [G16]:** Legislation means making laws and is different from legal

**Comment [G17]:** Deterrence is a key word you need for your essay.

laws predetermined punishments in order for ~~where~~ every citizen to understand ~~s~~ the consequences of ~~bad~~ their actions beforehand.

## Grammar: Band 6

For many centuries, people have been trying to find a perfect legislation system which is fair for victims and for offenders. Some opine that each crime requires an individual analysis and the punishment level should be personalised. However, others tend to believe that every offender should be judged based on the severity of the crime. Personally, I agree with the second point of view and I will support my stand with valid arguments in the following paragraphs.

To begin with, every offender has personal reasons why he or she committed a crime. Nobody is born as a criminal and only life circumstances force a person to break a law. According to ~~the~~ statistics, people with ~~the~~ low socio-economic status have more-a greater chances ~~to-of~~ ending up in prison. For example, poor living conditions and a lack of money are the most common reasons ~~of-for~~ shoplifting. Nevertheless, should the judge take into account ~~a-the~~ financial situation of the thief? I believe that ~~the~~ low income cannot be an excuse for a crime.

A personal approach to every offence in the legal system can encourage people to do more crime. In other words, people will stop being afraid of the law because ~~it-can-become~~ it is less straightforward. Now, people know that if you kill a human, you are going to jail. When the punishment level for a murder ~~will-varies~~ from one case to another, it can lure people into having ~~inge~~ a second thought thinking that they have serious reasons to break the law and believing that the court ~~can-may/will~~ forgive them. This practice can have tremendous consequences and lead to a raise-rise in ~~thea~~ crime rate.

In conclusion, an individualized approach to select the level of punishment ~~can-sounds~~ perfect, unfortunately, this method is not suitable for our society. To control the crime rate and prevent offences from happening, the government should have very straightforward laws where in every citizen understands the consequences of bad actions.

**Comment [G18]:** The definite article is for referencing known situations. Since you just talked about living conditions and money you can use 'the' here to reference back to it – this also helps your cohesion and coherence score.

**Comment [G19]:** Try to use a greater variety of modal verbs to express more nuanced meaning – may/might/should/ought/likely will, etc.

## Examiner's Summary

### Task Achievement: Band 6

#### Examiner's Report:

**Strengths:** The main ideas are relevant and well supported with relevant examples. You have a position/opinion and it is clear from the very beginning. You include a final detail/thought at the end and you understand the question correctly despite a small slip in the introduction.

**Weaknesses:** The support in both paragraphs is too general and does not make a very strong argument. More nuance in terms of your arguments would bring up all 3 other scores as well as it would require stronger language to argue more specific points fully.

**Action:** Check how I rewrote your essay and work on specific, detailed support for

your main ideas. To reach band 7, your arguments must be a little bit stronger and your examples a little bit more specific and developed.

## Cohesion & Coherence: Band 6

### Examiner's Report:

**Strengths:** Nice conclusion and introduction and clear paragraphing. You can use some substitution, referencing, and a bit of ellipsis as well. The ideas within and between sentences are clear and I could understand it throughout.

**Weaknesses:** Over-use of linking phrases, mistakes with articles, not enough ellipsis to make it sound natural.

**Action:** Work on ellipsis and don't use too many linking phrases in your next writing (no questions either).

## Vocabulary: Band 6

### Examiner's Report:

**Strengths:** A good range of vocabulary and some specific, flexible phrases. Mostly accurate and I was never confused about the meaning of what you were trying to say.

**Weaknesses:** Some mistakes, high repetition of vocabulary, very few nuanced, specific words or phrases to argue nuanced, specific arguments.

**Action:** Work on both accuracy and range. You need to use more quality collocations to reach band 7.

## Grammar: Band 6

### Examiner's Report:

**Strengths:** Some complex sentences throughout and very few mistakes. Good enough variety and variation between simple and complex.

**Weaknesses:** Mistakes with articles and modals. Bigger issues are with range – too many similar constructions and limited flexibility to make nuanced points.

**Action:** Practice with a greater range of complex constructions and try to maintain the same level of accuracy and improve your mistakes with modals and articles.

## Overall Score: Band 6

### Examiner's Summary:

**Strengths:** Very good essay overall but nothing stands out as being at band 7, though all are close to it. You understood the question, had relevant main ideas, supported them clearly, made few mistakes with grammar and your range of vocabulary was adequate for the task.

**Weaknesses:** You need more detailed, specific arguments to support your main ideas. If you do that, it will bring up your TA, CC, V, and G scores a lot. Your best chance of 6.5 is to have more detailed examples/support and some more complex sentences because TA and G are closest to band 7 right now. Very solid 6 at the moment.

# IELTS TASK 2 Writing band descriptors (public version)

Band	Task Achievement	Coherence and Cohesion	Lexical Resource	Grammatical Range and Accuracy
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>fully addresses all parts of the task</li> <li>presents a fully developed position in answer to the question with relevant, fully extended and well supported ideas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses cohesion in such a way that it attracts no attention</li> <li>skilfully manages paragraphing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses a wide range of vocabulary with very natural and sophisticated control of lexical features; rare minor errors occur only as 'slips'</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses a wide range of structures with full flexibility and accuracy; rare minor errors occur only as 'slips'</li> </ul>
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>sufficiently addresses all parts of the task</li> <li>presents a well-developed response to the question with relevant, extended and supported ideas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>sequences information and ideas logically</li> <li>manages all aspects of cohesion well</li> <li>uses paragraphing sufficiently and appropriately</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses a wide range of vocabulary fluently and flexibly to convey precise meanings</li> <li>skilfully uses uncommon lexical items but there may be occasional inaccuracies in word choice and collocation</li> <li>produces rare errors in spelling and/or word formation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses a wide range of structures</li> <li>the majority of sentences are error-free</li> <li>makes only very occasional errors or inappropriacies</li> </ul>
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>addresses all parts of the task</li> <li>presents a clear position throughout the response</li> <li>presents, extends and supports main ideas, but there may be a tendency to overgeneralise and/or supporting ideas may lack focus</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>logically organises information and ideas; there is clear progression throughout</li> <li>uses a range of cohesive devices appropriately although there may be some under-/over-use</li> <li>presents a clear central topic within each paragraph</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses a sufficient range of vocabulary to allow some flexibility and precision</li> <li>uses less common lexical items with some awareness of style and collocation</li> <li>may produce occasional errors in word choice, spelling and/or word formation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses a variety of complex structures</li> <li>produces frequent error-free sentences</li> <li>has good control of grammar and punctuation but may make a few errors</li> </ul>
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>addresses all parts of the task although some parts may be more fully covered than others</li> <li>presents a relevant position although the conclusions may become unclear or repetitive</li> <li>presents relevant main ideas but some may be inadequately developed/unclear</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>arranges information and ideas coherently and there is a clear overall progression</li> <li>uses cohesive devices effectively, but cohesion within and/or between sentences may be faulty or mechanical</li> <li>may not always use referencing clearly or appropriately</li> <li>uses paragraphing, but not always logically</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses an adequate range of vocabulary for the task</li> <li>attempts to use less common vocabulary but with some inaccuracy</li> <li>makes some errors in spelling and/or word formation, but they do not impede communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses a mix of simple and complex sentence forms</li> <li>makes some errors in grammar and punctuation but they rarely reduce communication</li> </ul>